



The City of Sumter Application for

Community Seal of Approval

American Association of Retirement Communities

On behalf of the citizens of Sumter, we would like to thank you for taking a moment of your time to let us share our beautiful city with you. Sumter, South Carolina is centrally located between the beaches of the Atlantic Ocean and the Blue Ridge Mountains. Our proximity and moderate climate make golf, tennis, hiking, biking and fishing a year-round delight for any age. We are especially proud to boast of our nationally-renowned Swan Lake Iris Gardens, which is home to the eight species of swans as well as beautiful Japanese Iris, and our historic Sumter Opera House, built in 1894, which still hosts an array of live performances to this day.

Along with the beauty that surrounds us, Sumter is proud to say that we are home to Shaw Air Force Base, a military community which has joined hands with the citizens of Sumter in providing cultural diversity within our community. Many military leaders, after traveling the entire world, have chosen to make Sumter their home, which is truly indicative of what we have to offer.

Please review our application and see for yourself the beauty of Sumter, South Carolina.



1. HOUSING

There is a range of housing available in Sumter, South Carolina. We have apartments, condos, cottages, patio homes, farms and ranches. The average cost of a three-bedroom home is \$100,900. Our beautiful water views consist of lakes, ponds and creeks. The average cost of a home with waterfront views is \$249,000. If living in the country is ideal for retirees, then we have plenty of space for a farm or ranch home. The average land price per acre is \$2000. Some retirees may not want yard work; therefore, an apartment or condo may be the right fit for living in Sumter. An average two bedroom apartment rents for \$600 per month and the average two bedroom condo sells for \$74,000. Whatever style of home or property you are looking for, Sumter can accommodate your needs.

2. HEALTH SERVICES

Palmetto Health Tuomey is Sumter, South Carolina's hospital. They are committed to improving the physical, emotional, and spiritual health of the entire community. The hospital has 301 beds, 85 specialists and 30 family practitioners to take care of patient needs. Tricare, Medicaid, Medicare and other insurances are accepted. Financial assistance is also an option for uninsured individuals who have annual incomes that are less than 100% of Federal Poverty Guidelines.

Sumter also has numerous 24-hour care facilities, hospice care providers and many other general and specialist medical fields, such as orthopedic surgery, optometrists, dentists, orthodontists, sleep disorder specialists, pain management, oncology, allergists, massage therapists and more.

3. PUBLIC SAFETY

We believe that strong relationships between public safety personnel and citizens are the foundation to creating safe, healthy communities. Our Fire Department is unique in that we are only one of very few across the U.S. that hold an ISO Class 1 rating, and that all paid and volunteer firefighters in the city and county serve under one Fire Chief.

Our Police Department philosophy is to improve the quality of life through intelligence-led policing. All crime rates in the City have been on a downward trend for the past five years, having experienced a 30.31% decrease overall. The most prevalent have been general larceny and auto B&E. While over 95% of all auto B&E incidents were related to unlocked vehicles, general larceny figures are mostly attributed to the same, with persons being careless with personal property. This decrease can also be attributed to increased patrols, strong community relationships, analyzing and utilizing crime trends, and economy stabilizing. Some of the programs we use to engage with the community include: neighborhood and business watch, random acts of kindness, property identification and public awareness campaigns, school mentoring and many more.



A unique program we have available for seniors in our community is Project CheckMate. This program allows participants to have personal interaction with law enforcement, providing seniors and their families with an added sense of protection and security. Project CheckMate provides regular visits to elderly and homebound residents, provides safety and security checks of their home, makes referrals to agencies as needed, and other minor services that are typically outside the scope of law enforcement, such as taking out the trash and assisting with minor repairs to the home.

Sumter's enhanced 911 emergency system is county-wide and logs key information, address and known issues identified when someone dials 911. If a caller is on a heart monitor, oxygen or has other known issues, the system will flag the information with the address to help responders assess the situation on arrival. The average emergency response time is 3-5 minutes.

Sumter builds community relationships through engagement with public safety personnel and strives to enhance the quality of life for all citizens through various community outreach, education and information programs.

4. TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is as easy as picking up a phone or walking to a route location. We have local taxi services, shuttle transportation, a bus station and the Santee-Lynches Regional Transit Authority (SWRTA) for standard routes. The cost for transportation is affordable and SWRTA offers free Fridays, which is fantastic at any age. Quick trips via SWRTA outside of Sumter include Columbia, our state capital, and the Myrtle Beach Grand Strand.

5. RESTAURANTS

You will never go hungry in Sumter! We have fast food, family, casual and fine dining to satisfy anyone's taste buds. Sumter has over 100 national and international chain restaurants to choose from, such as Burger King, McDonalds, Arby's, Moe's Southwestern Grill, Buffalo Wild Wings, McAllister's Deli, Dominoes Hut, Pita Pit, Chick-fil-a, Subway and more. Family and casual dining is abundant in Sumter, with choices ranging from American, Thai, Mexican, Caribbean, Italian, Greek, Japanese, Filipino, Cajun, Chinese and of course, Southern food. Try a few of our most popular local restaurants — the Thai House's exquisite sushi, the Palmetto Oyster House's alligator cheese cake, J. O'Grady's famous potato salad, Willie Sue's candied bacon and Simply Southern Bistro's fried green tomatoes. To celebrate the special occasion in your life, we recommend our fine dining specialties at Hamptons, Lilfreds and the Mill Pond Steakhouse — each location is designed for a memorable experience.

6. SHOPPING

Shopping in Sumter is convenient and less congested compared to the bigger cities of Columbia or Florence. We currently have over a dozen grocery stores in Sumter, including Aldi, Food Lion, IGA, Piggly Wiggly, Bi-Lo, Super Walmart and Walmart Neighborhood Market. We also have several discount stores like Dollar Tree, Dollar General and Family Dollar.

The Sumter Mall is great for shopping and walking. Find great deals at over 25 stores or grab a bite to eat at the food court. The mall is also labeled for walking distance — taking window shopping to a whole new level. Sumter has beautiful southern boutiques, antiques shops, specialty stores, hardware stores, craft stores and more. We have something for everyone right outside your door.



7. RECREATION

We have you covered in the recreation department. Sumter County and the City of Sumter partner together to keep you physically fit. Golf is offered in five different locations — three of which are open to the public and two that require membership or a pass. If you want to try something a little different, Dillon Park offers a free Disc Golf course.

We have 32 designated walking trails to fit your walking needs. We also have one of the largest YMCA's in the state of South Carolina. They have two indoor pools, a walking track, and various programs for active adults, including aqua aerobics, cardio sculpting, yoga, Silver Sneakers and more. Membership is required for the YMCA, but well worth the value.

If tennis is your sport, the City of Sumter has a world class tennis facility. The Palmetto Tennis Center has 24 hard courts available, two ball machines, three tennis professionals, a pro shop, and locker rooms with showers and restrooms. The tennis center also has a Pickle Ball court. In total, we have seven tennis facilities within the Sumter area with five open to the public and two requiring a membership or pass. Sumter also has over seven private exercise facilities, offering a variety of classes. Two are 24-hour fitness centers and fees or membership dues do apply.

If the great outdoors is your way to keep fit, we have plenty of nature to explore. Try fishing at Poinsett State Park, Second Mill Pond, or Pack's Landing. All locations are open to the public. Pack's Landing also provides private hunting and fishing excursions. In addition to fishing, Poinsett State Park offers 1,000 acres dotted with beautiful cabins, campsites, rentable paddle boats, paddle boards, and even a facility to host gatherings. Manchester State Forest is approximately 28,675 acres and is a great place to explore. If you are into mountain biking, trail riding, OHV, fishing, hunting or you just need to practice at the rifle and pistol range, this adventure is for you.

We love to entertain in Sumter. Every fourth Friday from May until October, the City of Sumter hosts a free concert downtown. The bands and music genres differ each month but are guaranteed to get you dancing. The historic Sumter Opera House has a

calendar of events you won't want to miss — from comedy to concerts to movies, the Opera House will keep you smiling. If you want to bring out your creative side, visit the Sumter County Cultural Center. The cultural center is located in the heart of the Hampton Park Historic District and is home to Patriot Hall, Sumter Little Theatre, Gallery 135 and the Sumter County Gallery of Art. Try out for a play, the orchestra, or sign up for a painting class. Swan Lake Iris Gardens hosts many activities throughout the year; however, the most popular events are the Iris Festival — one of the oldest in South Carolina, and the Fantasy of Lights — a Southern Christmas tradition.

8. CONTINUING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Advanced degrees and continuing education certifications are available at six different institutions in Sumter: University of South Carolina Sumter, Central Carolina Technical College, Morris College, Saint Leo University, Emory Riddle University and Troy State University. In addition to traditional courses, USC Sumter also offers personal enrichment classes in the Spring and Fall. Learn to master your iPhone or iPad, how to navigate the internet or social media, or learn a new language or hobby such as woodworking, photography, cake decoration and more. While CCTC offers younger students free tuition options, USC Sumter also offers free tuition to individuals over the age of 60. The opportunity to get the degree or training you always wanted is available right here in Sumter, South Carolina.

9. VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteer opportunities in Sumter are just a phone call away. Sumter Senior Services is the location for RSVP, a partnership caring for seniors in Sumter and the surrounding communities. Whatever your passion, there are plenty of volunteer opportunities in our community including, but not limited to:

- American Red Cross
- Children's School Programs
- City of Sumter
- Crosswell Home for Children
- Habitat for Humanity
- Meals on Wheels
- Operation Teammate
- Palmetto Health Tuomey
- Shepherd Center of Sumter
- SPCA
- Sumter County Active Lifestyles
- Sumter County Gallery of Art
- Sumter County Genealogical Society
- Sumter County Museum
- Sumter Green
- Sumter Little Theatre
- Sumter Opera House
- Sumter Senior Services
- Sumter Volunteers
- Sumter County Cultural Center
- Sumter County Recreation Department
- Sumter County
- United Ministries of Sumter
- United Way of Sumter, Clarendon and Lee Counties
- YMCA
- YWCA

Additionally, groups and clubs are a great way to volunteer your time. Most groups are actively involved with our local community and numerous philanthropic efforts.

- American Legion
- Chess Club
- Diabetes Support Group
- Friends of Swan Lake
- Lions Club
- Master Gardeners
- Newcomers Group
- Optimist Club
- Pilot Club
- Red Hat Society
- Rotary Club
- Sumter Artists Guild
- Sumter Digital Club
- Sumter Easy Riders Bike Club
- Sunset Country Club
- VFW

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